Water Conservation Awareness

Where is Your Water Going?

Showerheads If you are using conventional showerhead with an optional washer or flow restrictor to limit its delivery, you can still save more water and substantially improve the quality of your shower by removing that device and using a high-performance showerhead instead. To check the flow rate of your existing showerhead, turn the shower on all the way and see how long it takes to fill a one gallon plastic jug. If your showerhead fills a one gallon jug in fewer than 24 seconds, it's using more than 2.5 gallons per minute (gpm) and should be replaced with a more efficient model. If the jug takes more than 24 seconds to fill, you already have an efficient showerhead. There are many excellent showerheads on the market. When buying a showerhead, be sure that it delivers not more than 2.5 gpm, 1.5-2.0 will save you even more. Installing an efficient showerhead can save a typical family more than 25,000 gallons of water each year.

Toilets Toilets that leak water from the tank into the bowl waste 5% of all the indoor residential water use. That number is an estimated national average, if you have a leaky toilet, it may be wasting up to 50% of your indoor water. Without disturbing the float or flapper valve, put a few drops of dark food coloring in the tank and wait a few minutes. If the colored water shows up in the bowl, your toilet is in need of repair.

New toilet Unless your house was built in the past few years its most likely has a toilet which uses 5 or more gallons per flush. An efficient toilet uses 1.6 gallons per flush. For the average household, switching to efficient toilets will save approximately 15,000 gallons of water -$25- annually. If you can't afford to replace all your toilets immediately, you can start with the one that is used the most or the easiest thing is to put a plastic bottle filled with water in the toilet tank to reduce the amount of gallon of water per flush. For those with overflowing septic system problems, ultra low flush toilets may cure the problems for a lot less than the cost of improving the septic system.

Faucets Inexpensive but efficient replacement faucets can reduce your total indoor residential water use by 3-5%. That may not sound like much, but your energy savings, through reduced hot water use will repay the cost of the faucet in less than a year. A bathroom faucet which delivers 0.75-1.5 gpm will work fine. Your will need a higher flow in the kitchen to fill pots and pans, 2.0-2.5 gpm generally is enough. Efficient faucets are widely available through hardware and plumbing supply stores. Stores that sell them often have a display to help you find the right size. Be sure to determine the desired flow rate before you buy. **If a faucet does not mention flow rate, it probably is not an efficient model.**

Washing Machines Replacing a typical top loading washing machine, which spins on a vertical axis, with a new front loading model, can reduce your wash water needs by 30-60%. These new efficient washers are

Efficient water use can have major environmental, public health, and economic benefits by helping to improve and maintain ecosystems, and protect natural resources. Efficient use of water, through behavioral, operational, or equipment changes, if practiced broadly can help mitigate the impact on the environment of our community. Efficient measures can also save the homeowner money on their water and energy bills.

available in front and top-loading models. You will not only save water, but also detergent, energy, and money.

Lawn Watering Proper watering practices can typically cut lawn water consumption by 20-50% while maintaining or even improving the health of your lawn. You can tell when your lawn needs watering simply by walking across it. If the grass springs back up after you lift your foot, it's not time to water yet; if it stays flat, it's time to water again. When only a few dry spots are present, watering them by hand can save water and make the color of your lawn more even. Water in the early morning, when wasteful evaporation will generally be lowest. If you have an automatic sprinkler system, place an empty tuna cans or rain gauges around your lawn. The time that it takes to fill that tuna can is the time that you should have your sprinkler on. Also check if your sprinkler is distributing water evenly. To keep your automatic sprinkler operating efficiently, adjust it at least one a month during the watering season.

Remaking your landscape follow these guidelines:

- Make sure your soil has plenty of organic matter to hold water. If it does not use compost to improve the soil before you lay down grass. Also use organic matter when planting shrubs.
- Keep your lawn small, and put it on a flat level area where the water won't run off.
- Choose a sprinkler pattern that matches your lawn.
- Use a drip irrigation micro sprinkler for your shrubs and shower beds if they require watering.
- A proper designed and installed system can reduce both water use and maintenance
- Use a low water use grass or other water efficient grass.
- If the roof of your home has rain gutters, make sure the downspouts are not aimed toward a paved surface. Turn downspouts into areas with plantings that will make better use of rainfall than letting it run down the driveway and into a storm drain. Be sure to choose plants for these areas that can adapt to having more water, and be sure water does not pool next to buildings.
- Swales (small dips in the ground) and berms (raised earthen areas) can help divert runoff that is rushing from your yard. A bit of earth shaping can also be an attractive design element in your landscape. A berm-and-swale combination might be especially appropriate if your waterfront yard has a seawall. That, in combination with a maintenance-free zone of native plants, can make your yard more lagoon-friendly. Minor alterations to the lay of the land won't require permits or engineers, but any major earth work should have the professional touch and will require regulatory review.
- Whenever possible, use bricks, gravel, turf block, mulch, pervious concrete or other porous materials for sidewalks, driveways or patios. These materials allow rainwater to seep into the ground, helping to filter pollutants and reducing the amount of runoff from your yard. In some cases they may even cost less to install then typical paving materials.

For more information on water conservation, contact Miami Beach Public Works Department's Office of Environmental Resources at 305-673-7080. Miami Beach City Hall is located 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach

This publication was brought to you by the **City of Miami Beach Public Works Department**. Please visit the city's website at www.miamibeachfl.gov to learn more about what's going on in your specific neighborhood

City of Miami Beach
1700 Convention Center Drive
Miami Beach, Fl 33139

"We are committed to providing excellent public service and safety to all who live, work and play in our vibrant tropical, historic community"

To request this material in accessible format, sign language interpreters, information on access for persons with disabilities,and/or any accommodation to review any document or participate in any city-sponsored proceeding, please call 305-604-2489 (voice) or 305-673-7218 (TTY), five days in advance to initiate your request. TTY users may also call 711 (Florida Relay Service).